

Valley Wide HRC Conversational Exchange Meeting
November 3, 2003
Chandler Sunset Branch Library
4930 W. Ray Road
5:30 – 8:00 p.m.
MINUTES

ATTENDANCE:

City of Chandler

Arif Kazmi
Gina Hill
Dan Courtney
Edward Clavell
Leah Powell, Staff Liaison
Niki Tapia, Staff
Julie Benson, Staff

City of Gilbert

Marian Barchilan
José Franco

City of Mesa

Dr. Roberta Diaz

City of Scottsdale

John Tutelman
Carol Padwe
Velicia McMillan, Staff Liaison

City of Tempe

Marlene Gerstman
Edwin Gonzalez-Santin
David Strang
Virginia Pesqueira
Rosa Inchausti, Diversity Manager

Members of the Public

Amanda Hansen
Meagan Burns
Oscar Crawford
Alex Sonntag
Edythe Jenson

WELCOME

Arif Kazmi, Chair, City of Chandler Human Relations Commission, introduced the Vice Mayor of Chandler, Lowell Huggins.

Vice Mayor Huggins thanked everyone for participating this evening. He stated that Chandler is happy to be hosting this conversational exchange. He thanked everyone for all of the work they are doing in their communities. He further stated the commissions' have come together to share a vision for promoting diversity through the entire Valley and expanding diversity awareness and acceptance in our communities.

Vice Mayor Huggins commented on the importance of this type of meeting with everyone working together, having joint meetings, and learning from one another.

INTRODUCTIONS

Gina Hill stated she is on the Human Relations Commission for the City of Chandler. She further stated she once heard that there can be no change without exchange and that was a very poignant statement.

Ms. Hill asked the commissioners' to go around the table, introduce themselves. All Attendees introduced themselves.

Ms. Hill reviewed the meeting format.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM MEMBER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Chandler

Arif Kazmi reviewed the events they are planning for the Celebration of Unity & Multi-Cultural Festival:

- Luncheon Friday, January 16
- Festival Saturday, January 17
- Featuring Dr. Jewell Parker Rhodes
- Essay Contest for grades 4-12

Mr. Kazmi discussed the events they have recently completed:

- Hispanic Heritage Month Poster Contest

- Hispanic Heritage Month Photo Exhibit
- Latino Film night
- Mano a Mano Education Fair

Mr. Kazmi reviewed the new activities:

- Working with Police Department on implementation of HRC related Police Study recommendations
- Miss Indian Arizona Scholarship Pageant – October 2004

Mesa

Dr. Roberta Diaz, Mesa, stated she is newly appointed to the Mesa Human Relations Commission. She further stated that she is a principal with the Mesa Public Schools. She reported they just completed the Diversity Conference that was held in September. She further reported that it was very well received and attended by a diverse group of people. She remarked they are working on a MLK celebration.

Dr. Diaz stated she is the principal at Veora E. Johnson Elementary School in Mesa. She further stated the Veora Johnson was the first Black American principal. She remarked that it is a privilege to work at this school where the spirit of unity so is alive.

Scottsdale

John Tutelman, Scottsdale, stated they have recently developed a pamphlet explaining about the Scottsdale Human Relations Commission. He reported that Scottsdale held its first ever Hispanic Heritage Celebration. He further reported they have sponsored the Unlearning Racism Workshop. They also are presenting the Cross-Cultural Communication Series.

Tempe

Marlene Gerstman, Tempe, thanked Chandler for hosting this exchange. She stated they have been involved in the diversity audit within the City. They have worked on their strategic plan. They have also identified ways that people from different backgrounds can feel welcomed in the community. She further stated they have added a Diversity Office. She reported they are continuing with their Diversity Dialogue sessions. She concluded they are also working on the MLK Celebration.

Gilbert

The Gilbert Human Relations Commission reported they just passed their strategic Plan and funding criteria. They will be involved in the APS Black Heritage Activity at Tempe Town Lake. They are involved in the inquiries with the Police Department whether they have diversity training and hate crime statistics. They had a presentation from Mesa's Diversity Office. They have worked with the Mexican Consulate on the matricula consular ID Card.

REVIEW OF REGIONAL ISSUES

East Valley Regional MLK Unity Walk

Ms. Powell introduced Richard Bass with Acclaimed Events to provide information on the East Valley Regional MLK Unity Walk.

Richard Bass stated APS is sponsoring the MLK Diversity Festival on January 31, 2004. He further stated recently Guadalupe and the Town of Queen Creek have come on board. He noted ASU International Students Association has also come on board. He reported this event has gained a lot of momentum. He further reported he hopes everyone will attend this event and take part in the unity walk.

Carol Padwe, Scottsdale, stated that Scottsdale would not be able to participate in the Unity Walk because it is on the same day as the Phoenix Open and the Parada del Sol Parade. She further stated they would be having a walk on Sunday January 18th, in conjunction with the Sunday Affair event.

Mr. Bass stated they anticipated there would be these types of challenges early on. He further stated he would hope they would be able to participate next year. Ms. Padwe stated they would be interested in sponsoring a booth.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Development of a Public Information Plan PSA Presentation

John Tutelman provided an outline of the proposed PSA developed by the Public Information subcommittee. They are proposing using symbols of people, who do not share their beliefs, that tells people that hate is not an American Value. He remarked that they need something that would grab people's attention.

Ms. Powell requested information on the media sources that would air the PSA and how it would be used. Mr. Tutelman stated television stations will play PSAs

but usually they are shown early in the morning so they would distribute the PSA to all of the television stations. They will also play them on city cable stations.

Mr. Tutelman stated the committee tried to come up with universal images of hate. He stated the three they chose are Klan Person, Osama bin Laden, and Hitler giving a Nazi salute. Over each would be the red circle with a line through it stating hate is not an American value. Then they would state to join the battle against hate.

Ms. Hill stated her comments are meant to be constructive, noting that she felt the message was fabulous but she was a little disturbed by the images. She further stated that she did not know if they were universal enough. Mr. Tutelman stated that he would not disagree but the message is directed to the American television viewing audience. A discussion ensued that the message might be too isolated and narrow. It was noted that the picture of Osama bin Laden could cause a negative reaction because there are a lot of people who dress like he does and they are not terrorists. It was suggested that instead of using the image of Osama bin Laden they use the outline of the World Trade Center.

The group discussed the purpose of the PSA and identified the following:

- Let public know what the HRC is and does – increase awareness.
- To be inclusive
- Teaching tolerance for differences (parents & kids)
- Promote tolerance, diversity, and unity
- Envision HRC “highest values” by HRC members (real people)
- Identify role of HRC - Identify discrimination that is not so obvious
- Educate – Present a positive image of what diversity and unity are
- Better way of life (quality) Ask: What kind of community do you want your children to grow up in? Social understanding (universal language). Visualize events HRC does.

The group discussed their ideas for the PSA:

- Images (strong/negative) (strong/positive)
- Powerful negative beginning – strong positive ending

- Norman Rockwell
- Flag with children (more visual)
- Positive images
- It is okay to be uncomfortable
- Hate images (central to AZ)
- Teaching tolerance (children and teens)
- Images of a march
- Don't hate haters!

EVALUATION AND GOALS FOR NEXT MEETING

Ms. Hill asked all of the attendees to chose their top three purposes for the PSA. She further stated they would compile the top three choices for the PSA that everyone agreed to at this meeting.

Ms. Powell thanked everyone for attending. She reported the City of Mesa would host the next exchange in February.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.